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AN
EXAMINATION
OF THE
MERITS AND TENDENCY
OF THE
PURSUIITS of LITERATURE.

Part First.

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THE author has given a quotation from the Apology of Athenagoras in his title-page, which proves two things of some consequence: first, that he quotes from memory; and next, that he does not understand Greek; for he has forgotten two words in the original, which are in the accusative case, and given two by memory, which are in the dative: *τοῖς ἡμοῖς λόγοις ἐπινεύσατε*, instead of *τὴν βασιλικὴν κεφαλὴν ἐπινεύσατε*. It is moreover to be wished, that the author had thoroughly read this treatise, and imbibed some of the mildness of its spirit: it is the most candid, moderate, and intelligible, of all the apologies for Christianity, and of all the writings of the Fathers.



*AVERSE to formal dedications and long prefaces, I will not trespass on my reader's patience with either; and I have but one acknowledgment to make to my learned friends: To the Rev. Hugh Moises, late Master of the Free Grammar-School at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and late Rector of Graystock, in Cumberland, I am indebted for what I esteem my greatest happiness; from him I first imbibed the love of learning; to him, therefore, I dedicate the first fruits of my classical studies: for nine years of my life, I found in him all that * Quinilian requires of a schoolmaster, and many others have done the same. —I am happy to have this opportunity of paying a tribute of respect and gratitude to an excellent, but neglected man, for all that I owe him: if he does not now enjoy the reward of his merits, the shame is with those who have never given him, but most with those who have indirectly deprived him of preferment: yet he is rich and happy: his happiness is in his own conscience, and his riches are his good works; these no man can take from him. Tho' he is now in a ripe old age, may be yet see many years of honour and of comfort.*

Sic omni detectus pectora nube
Finem Nestoræ precor egrediare senectæ.

Statius Syl. 1—3.

* *Lib. 2. c. iv.*

EXAMINATION,

¶



TO attempt to examine the whole of a work, which embraces such a variety of subjects as the PURSUITS of LITERATURE, might seem a rash and hardy undertaking, were I not satisfied that many of them are treated so superficially as to require no great depth of reading, to expose to contempt the arrogance of an author who attempts to guide the public taste, where he seems so little qualified to decide : but before I enter into a particular discussion of the merits of the work, let me not omit to express my indignation, with all the force I am master of, to reprobate the dark, insidious, cowardly policy of stabbing in the dark, those whom he dares not face in open day. He pretends to be the advocate, the defender, the supporter of every thing that is noble and gener-

A

ous,

ous, of every thing that is British, of every thing that is worth preserving in our national constitution and character ; and he disgraces them both, by a conduct worthy only of a scurrilous Italian, without either courage or honesty. Does he imagine that any man regards the reproofs of an anonymous censor, who shews no title to his office, either from his character or his former exertions ? Let him look to the great satirists of former times, and see how they acted, as he is fond of the authority of the classics : they publicly stood forward to attack vice and folly, defended by the triple armour of their own innocence ; and whenever they came forth to the charge, they spread terror in the ranks of their enemies : they were always dreaded, because they were known : had Horace, Juvenal, or Pope, concealed their names, their writings could never have outlived themselves ; after a little temporary popularity, they must have sunk, where the author of the *Pursuits of Literature* is sinking, into nameless oblivion : but now they and their authors live together ; we admire them for the sake of each other ; the men, because they had the courage to avow them ; and the works, because they required

quired it. But however our author may flatter his own vanity, his satire carries very little weight with it : many people read, but few regard him. Does he think that the efficacy of his book will be lost, if his name were known, and that his only chance to be attended to is to sneak under the fame of another ? or does he fear the personal consequences of his many personal attacks ? If so, literature and morality will not be much benefited by a champion who dares not defend them openly, as they have a right to be defended. The book, it is true, has gone through eight editions ; an extraordinary number for a work which is partly literary, and dragged down too by such a dead weight of quotations : but its resistance to these disadvantages is in a great measure owing to the political matter it contains, and the number of individuals it attacks ; for some people have a great desire to see what is said of them in print ; and others are not less desirous to see what is said of their acquaintance, particularly if it is ill-natured : but let not the author be proud of this circumstance ; for it is no more a proof of public approbation, than the crowds that attend

many public fights * are a proof that they are liked : there is a great difference between liking, and liking to see. Should it be asked, why I (who am not even alluded to in the book) stand forward the champion of other people ? I will answer, it is not the men, but the principles which are attacked, that I am anxious to defend : if others have not thought the author worthy of an answer, I have ; not because he has the talent to be dangerous, but because he has the power to misrepresent ; not because he is vigorous, but because he is venomous ; not because he is admired, but because he is read, and read too by many who cannot see faults without having them pointed out. With such intentions I have ventured to come forward to a contest, in which I trust to be in some measure equal to my antagonist ; not because I am a David, but because he is no Goliath. I have judged that the best method of shewing the book in its true light, is to examine it piece by piece : it is the longest, but it is the fairest ; and if I should prove, as I trust to do, that the author's egotism and vanity are every where evident ; that his style is poetical and affected ;

* An Execution, or a Whipping, for instance.

affected ; that he is declamatory, and destitute of argument ; that neither his quotations, nor his applications of them, are just and honest ; that he has not read many of the works which he censures ; that his judgments of books and men are not impartial, but directed by his political prejudices and his private dislikes ; that his sentiments on politics and religion are illiberal and bigoted ; and that he is every where peevish, pedantic, and malignant ; that under pretence of love for our English constitution, he preaches up despotism, which is the only government he heartily admires ; if I should prove all, or even part of this, I trust I have done a little towards shaking his character with the public, and contributed my share to free them from the imperious tyranny of a literary dictator. An advertisement prefixed to the eighth edition contains some acknowledgement of the author's errors ; and if he goes on with these confessions, he will at last obtain some degree of credit.

“ Yet I am still of opinion, that no man of
 “ candour and reflection could wish to see
 “ any mistakes continued without correction,
 “ or the various parts of it again presented to
 “ the public, without improvements and ad-
 “ ditions

“ditions to the poetry and notes, as circumstances arose to prompt or to require them.” This is a proof that much needs to be, but not that much has been, amended. Let me ask the author, *en passant*, if it is permitted, by the rules of punctuation, to begin one sentence with a capital letter before another is finished?

“It will be seen, however, that, by omissions and alterations, I have expressed a liberal concern for my *unintentional* mistakes, with the spirit and breeding of a gentleman.” There are other things required of a gentleman, which he has not done, while he has done those things which he ought not to have done: he has yet much ill breeding to atone for. Such is our author’s lust for quotation, that it is as impossible for him to write a page without it, as for a hardened snuff-taker to be ten minutes without a pinch. Let me advise him, however, always to stick to the text, and not, when a passage makes directly against him, attempt to turn it his own way, as he has down the following from Johnson’s Debates: “The heat which has offended them is the ardour of conviction, and that zeal
“ for

“ for the service of my country, which
 “ neither hope nor fear shall influence me to
 “ suppress. I will not sit unconcerned when
 “ (PUBLIC) LIBERTY is threatened or in-
 “ vaded, nor look in silence upon (*intended*)
 “ PUBLIC ROBBERY. I will exert my en-
 “ deavours, at whatever hazard, to drag the
 “ aggressors to justice, *whoever may protect*
 “ *them*, AND WHOEVER MAY (ULTIMATE-
 “ LY) PARTAKE OF THE (NATIONAL)
 “ PLUNDER.” Here, by the help of one al-
 teration, three insertions, and two omissions,
 he has twisted the passage, or, as he calls
 it, applied the spirit of it to his purpose.—
 This is a new mode of quotation, which, if
 generally adopted, will be ten times more
 dangerous than the ravages of criticism, for
 that seldom extends beyond a word at a time,
 but this will in the end pervert the sentiments
 of an author so completely, that he may be
 made to speak any man’s opinions but his
 own ; nay, even the most opposite.—I intend
 to do the author a favour which he has no
 right to expect, but as it is meant for the pub-
 lic, and not for him, I do not ask his thanks :
 as his quotations are in general very loose,
 some without references, some with refer-
 ences

ences very insufficient, I will supply them as far as they are to be supplied ; for many, I suspect, are of his own making, as he seems fonder of Latin and Greek than his own language : I will at the same time point out their errors.

“ *Δία Εὐφροσύνας καὶ δυσφροσύνας.*” 2. Cor. vi. ver. 8. In the motto to the introductory letter he has given a long quotation from Tasso, which, as it stands, appears to have been taken regularly from the Poet, without any other words intervening ; but it is not so, there are no less than two whole stanzas between them : this licence may be permitted, when, as in this case, the meaning is not altered ; but in other cases, of which I will give many instances, it is dangerous, because an author may be made to say what he certainly never intended ; but though the meaning is evident, the force of its application is not so easily seen, unless the author wishes it to be understood that he has any thing to do with the powers of the lower regions, to whom the words of the magician are addressed. In the three first paragraphs of the introductory letter he seems to glory in his shame, when he exults in the impossibility of finding him out : in spite

spite of all that he may say to the contrary, I am of opinion that it is not the work of one man: his word will go for nothing, because no man can tell whose word it is. He has only one method of disproving conjectures; till he adopts that, every man's conjecture will have the weight it seems to deserve. If I am not mistaken, I am justified in applying the words of Martial to one of the persons concerned—

————— *Facile est Epigrammata belle
Scribere, sed Librum scribere difficile est.*

Lib. 7. Ep. 84. ad Sabellum vanum Poetam.

I might add too, that it is easier to make speeches—the doctor understands me.

“ I always thought with Junius, that a
“ printed paper receives very little consider-
“ ation from the most respectable signature;
“ but I would not be understood to insinuate,
“ with that great and consummate writer,
“ that *my* name would carry any weight
“ with it.” Our author seems here to mis-
take the question; it is not whether a book
is of more or less value with or without a
name, but whether it is honest for any man
to conceal his name from those whom he
attacks. The authority of one anonymous
writer can never justify another.

“ Criticisms and dissenting conjectures on
 “ the subject are alike the object of my in-
 “ effable contempt. More sagacity must be
 “ exerted than the *Ardelios* of the day are
 “ masters of, who are so kind as to think of
 “ me, who most certainly never think of
 “ them. It is however my resolution, that
 “ not one of these idle conjectures shall ever
 “ be extended to *you*. ‘ *Quid de me alii loquan-*
 “ *tur, ipsi videant ; sed loquentur tamen.*’* It is
 “ a voice ; nothing more. Prudence indeed
 “ suggests a caution which I unwillingly
 “ adopt, and restrains the eagerness I feel for
 “ the display of *your* virtues and of *your* ta-
 “ lents. But those virtues must at present be
 “ left to the testimony of your own con-
 “ science ; and your talents within those
 “ limits of exertion, in which an undiscern-
 “ ing spirit has too long suffered them to be
 “ confined. The bird of day however al-
 “ ways looks to the sun.”—By dissenting
 conjectures, does he mean conjectures of the
 Dissenters ? I suppose not ; though from the
 contempt he expresses, I might think he did.
 If he means conjectures differing from each
 other, he should have said discordant con-
 jectures :

* Cic. Somn. Scip. Sect. 7.

tures : to dissent, means to differ from any single opinion as a standard to others. Why did he write *ardelios* with a capital letter ? and why did he not translate it into busybodies, among his other translations ? for it is as little intelligible to those who do not understand latin, as any other latin word ; and it is not every body that has read Martial, or remembers Phædrus : if he never thinks of these curious people, why talk of them, if his vanity is not a little gratified by exciting curiosity ? and yet even his friend he is desirous should be talked of ; for to keep a thing a secret is rather an odd way to prevent conjectures : but why not let the gentleman display his own talents, if he likes it ? and if does not, why not let him alone ? by the bird of day, I suppose he means the owl, or bird of night, like *lucius a non lucendo* ; for there is no other bird that resembles our author and his companion in darkness. If he wishes completely to punish him for not publishing his works, he need only use the revenge of Ausonius, and tell him,

Qui sua non edit carmina, nostra legat.—Epig. 34.

If he will not publish his own works, let him read mine.

In the quotation from Cicero, he has sub-

stituted the word *me* for *te*—a slight difference, but proper to be remarked, that it may be seen where he has quoted an author literally, and where he has only adapted him.

“ And when I have commanded a silence
 “ within my own breast, I think a still small
 “ voice may whisper those gratulations, from
 “ which an honest man may best derive comfort from the past, and motives for the future action.” The silence is not within his own breast, for there the matter is known, but to the world. The words ‘ still small voice’ are not marked as a quotation, though they are taken from 1 *Kings* xix. ver. 12.

Before he claims the character of an honest man, let him reflect whether any thing can be honest which shuns the light ; and as to his comfort, I do not envy him,—the comfort of having made mischief and quarrels.

“ The wayward nature of the time, and
 “ the paramount necessity of securing to this
 “ kingdom her political and religious existence, and the rights of society, have urged
 “ and stimulated me, as you well know, to
 “ offer *this endeavour* to preserve them, by a
 “ solemn, laborious, and disinterested appeal
 “ to my countrymen.”—The political existence

ence of a nation, signifies her existence as a political establishment of men living together in civil society, but they may exist as a nation without a religious establishment ; therefore the expression is faulty, it is inappropriate ; the rights of society do not depend upon any form of government : the Poles are the only people who have lost their political existence as a nation during the present contest. That his appeal is solemn, no one will deny ; that it is laborious, appears from his manner of writing ; but that it is disinterested, we have no evidence.

“ *Vitæ est avidus, quisquis non vult, mundo secum pereunte, mori.* ”—This is one of the quotations to which our author has left me to supply the reference ; it is taken from the chorus to the fourth act of Seneca’s tragedy of *Thyestes*.

“ Yet I see, with sorrow and fear, the political constitutions of Europe falling around us, or crumbling into dust, under the tyrannical Republic of France.”—In most quarrels which last a long time, the original ground of dispute is apt to be forgotten ; so it is in the present contest : the French have forgot that they were urged to the war in defence

defence of their liberty ; and the coalition on the continent has forgot that they undertook it for the defence of despotism.—Let the author remember the original motive of the war, and he will see why the political constitutions of Europe are crumbling to dust, day by day.

“ She has indeed terminated in the change or overthrow of each of them, *but of this kingdom.*”—Does our author mean to say, that we have experienced no change since the commencement of the war ? he will doubtless say it is for the better, and I should be sorry to differ from him on so *nice* a point. ‘Each’ is an improper word, it should be *all* ; *each* means *either of two* in prose.

“ Frenchmen were always brutal, when unrestrained.” So will all nations, who have been long restrained ; for the natural successor of despotism is anarchy. Let me here ask the author, whether it is more consonant to the spirit of christianity to lament and endeavour to soften ; or to exult in, and enflame national antipathies ? Philosophy weeps over, and wishes to alleviate the miseries of mankind ; and is christianity less mild, less gentle and benevolent ?

Our

Our author's stile is a tissue of quotations in the next sentence. The whole of this metaphor is borrowed from *Jeremiah* v. 8. and is highly poetical, both in language and idea; for the prophets, we all have heard, were poets.

"And when their cruelty is at last wearied
 "out and exhausted, and demands a pause,
 "they call it clemency." Here we have
 'and' beginning a sentence again; which, though justified by many examples, is certainly improper; for a word, whose only use is to connect a sentence, ought never to begin one. The sentiment here is borrowed from Tacitus's Life of Agricola, sect. 30.—
Ubisoliditudinem fecerunt pacem appellant.

"France had been long looking for that
 "which *her philosophers* had taught her to
 "term, the PARALLELISM OF THE SWORD;
 "and she has found it. That sword has in-
 "deed swept down not only every royal
 "crest, but every head which raised itself
 "above the plain of their equality." In which of the French philosophers our author has found the 'parallelism of the sword' recommended, I will thank him to point out to me; I have not yet read him. As to their
 equality,

equality, I am afraid he does not comprehend it: it is not equality of riches or of poverty,—but equality of rights, secured by equality of representation; and while that principle is preserved as the fundamental article of their written constitution, and called into action once in every year, Frenchmen cannot long be slaves, but by their own consent; and though they have given their executive government great strength to crush internal factions and conduct external war, yet the people have not surrendered their power for ever; it is still within their reach, and after a peace will be soon reclaimed.—Their affairs are now in a critical state, yet I will apply to their famous Republic these words, from *Racine's Mithridate*.

Plus il est malheureux, plus il est redoutable.

Aët. i. Scene 5.

‘ My sentence is for open war.’ So spake the bloody Moloch; for the illustration of whose character, I refer my readers to the note on Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, book ii. l. 43. to try if they can find any resemblance to that of our author, when he speaks of war.—Whatever may be his opinion, there are others who think we should have been safer
if

if the experiment of peace had been tried, allowing both sides to have been doubtful : in my opinion no man is a christian who will not sacrifice every thing to peace ; such is the literal acceptation of christianity.

“ Among the bands and associated energies of England I also, in my degree and very limited capacity, will struggle for the principle of her life.”—This affected phraseology is derived from a newspaper called *The World*, which some years ago infected our language with new and awkward combinations of words ; but this is not our author’s only model, he has looked up to Junius,—but greatly has he failed.

“ I feel, in common with the wise and reflecting, that the constitution of Great-Britain, even with its real or apparent defects, is worthy of continuance, and I hope of perpetuity.” To confess that our constitution has real defects is honest ; but to wish to perpetuate them is more than foolish, it is wicked.

“ Our ancestors in 1688 once adopted the words of the aged patriarch, ‘ We have blessed it, yea, and it shall be blessed.’ In this one response, I trust we shall all be

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“ ortho-

“ orthodox ; and with one heart and voice
 “ condemn all the heresies of Gallic policy,
 “ in the words of the Alexandrian liturgy of
 “ old,—*Των αἱρεσιῶν καταλυσον φρυαγματα.*”——The
 quotation is from *Genesis* xxvii. 33. but
 the blessing is worn out : whether we are
 orthodox in our blessings or our curses, is now
 of little consequence ; but it is well when we
 disguise the vulgarity of the latter in Alexan-
 drian or any other Greek ; it shews some
 idea of shame.

“ Government and Literature are now
 “ more than ever intimately connected.”—
 Should our author mean to say that every
 government ought to feel the force of liter-
 ature, I will agree with him ; but if he means
 that literature ought to feel the force of
 government, there we totally differ. I might
 enlarge on this subject, if I felt at liberty to
 express my sentiments ; but the times of dis-
 cussion are past, we must now all think alike.

“ I thought it just and right to set before
 “ them excellence opposed to excellence, *
 “ as well as error contrasted to error. In the
 “ present

* “ *Αγαθὸς ἀγαθοῖς ἀντιῆταξεν.* Dion. Halicarn. ad Cne.
 “ Pompeum de Platone Epist. p. 757. Sect. 1. Vol. 6.
 Ed. Reiske. 1777.

“ present change of manners, opinions, go-
 “ vernment, and learning, you may remem-
 “ ber I gave it as my opinion, in which, after
 “ some reflection, you concurred, that a va-
 “ riation is now required in the mode of
 “ conducting satirical writing. I mean, by
 “ calling in the reciprocal assistance of poetry
 “ and prose in the same work, for the great
 “ end ; if it is designed for general perusal,
 “ and an extended application. I think this
 “ work is the first attempt of the kind, in the
 “ sense which I propose.”—Does he mean
 to compare the dull malignity of his own
 work, with the lively, piercing, candid cri-
 ticism of *Dionysius* ? does he mean to say
 that he has followed his good-natured ex-
 ample in shewing the beauties of authors
 before their defects ? every page of his book
 destroys the pretence : I will shew many
 instances where he has spoken only of the
faults of a writer, without saying a word of
 his *merits* or his *beauties*. There is in
 this sentence the same want of connec-
 tion with the rest, which is to be found in
 every page of his work. In the quotation,
Αγαθὸς ἀγαθοῖς ἀντεξέταζειν, there is the slight varia-
 tion of *ἀντεξέταζειν* for *ἀντεξέταζαν*. *Contrasted to,*

is not English ; it should be, *contrasted with*, good Mr Critic. For what cause is it that our author must now vary the mode of satirical writing, which has been in use, with few exceptions, from the time of Ennius to the present day ? was the satire of Juvenal and Persius not sufficient for the correction of Roman vices ? or, are ours greater ? I trust not ; the true cause of the change is evident : our author had not room, nor power enough in verse to indulge his private malignity in the detail of anecdote and slander : but in truth this is not entirely a new mode of satire ; the union of *poetry* and *prose* is as old as the times of *Varro*, and revived by the authors of the *Satire Menippée*, a coarse satire against the framers and adherents of the league formed in 1593, by the Guises, against the Protestant party in France. To him this may be the only literary support left ; but I trust we have yet men of sufficient genius to defend the cause of virtue and morality, without transgressing the bounds of legitimate satire : but mark,—he wishes his satire to be extensively understood, and then come two Greek lines for general perusal ; *for the great end*, is an odd expression, and snaps off the sentence rather awkwardly. “ I

“ I know not whether I am mistaken, but
 “ as it appears to me, the power of legitimate
 “ satire thus extended, and strengthened with
 “ the rampart of prose, and fully understood,
 “ is the best, if not the only literary support
 “ left.” The ministers laugh at our author’s
 fortifications, which are but mole-heaps compared with the ramparts they have raised.*

“ I am sure it cannot be construed into an
 “ *hired service*.” If he is, it is more than any
 body else can be : he is perpetually vaunting
 his own independence, his own consequence,
 and his own talents : it was not thus that
 Junius amused his readers ; he was wiser :
 he knew that no anonymous writer can have
 credit for more than is evident, which are his
 talents ; therefore he left all the rest unsaid,
 but of those he had some right to boast.

“ It is as true in our time, as in that of
 “ Dryden, (I will give you his own words)
 “ that ‘ the common libellers of the day, are
 “ as free from the imputation of wit, as of
 “ morality.’ Satire has another tone and an-
 “ other

* This simile seems to suit our author exactly : he works under ground like the mole, and has thrown up a few heaps of dirt, which are too trifling either for annoyance or defence.

“ other character.” This quotation from *Dryden’s Dedication of his Translations of Juvenal and Persius*, p. 164. ed. 1760. 4th vol. octavo, is rather awkwardly introduced, because only the word *libellers* answers his purpose: he means merely to say, that satire is no libel; but the quotation says much more, which he could not leave out. In the language of an *apostle* he speaks of the office of a *satirist*,—‘*Magnificabo apostolatum meum.*’ Rom. xi. 13. Is not the stile rather too high?

“ Learning is ostentation, censure is malignity.” The constant and ill-judged obtrusion of learning *is* ostentation; and censure does proceed from malignity, when it is not impartially bestowed.

“ The authorised instruments of lawful war are lawful.” This is what the logicians call arguing in a circle: the war is lawful, because the weapons are lawful, and the converse, without proving either to be so. Throughout the whole of this passage, which is too long to insert, he is apprised of the objection that all satire is contrary to the letter and the spirit of Christianity; and he has not attempted to answer it, but artfully taken another position, and attempted to justify it from

from the authority of the community. To the blessing which is pronounced on the meek, he can lay no claim, nor to that on the merciful, nor on the peace-makers, for neither meekness, mercy, nor peace, are among his good qualities : but he is determined to be the means of ensuring a blessing to others whom he has reviled, and persecuted, and spoke all manner of evil against, falsely, for Christ's sake ; which are all who differ from his own faith ; we have heard the judgment pronounced on him who calleth his brother a fool, and we have heard how many he has called both fools and rogues ; we are commanded to love our enemies ; but he does not even love his friends.* Judge not, that ye be not judged, Matt. vii. 1. cuts up all his satire by the roots.—‘Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eye ;’ but I will pursue these charges no further ; they are sufficient to condemn him with any one who takes the gospel literally ; and who has authorised us to give it another meaning ? Jesus Christ followed literally what he preached to others.

“ Satire

* Matt. v. 44. & Note (b) Dial. 2d.

“ Satire never can have effect, without a
 “ personal application.” I agree with him
 that satire loses its effect when not addressed
 to individuals, for what is general no man will
 apply to his own character, if it is against
 him ; but an author who names others, is
 bound by the laws of honour and honesty to
 give his own name : if he advances what is
 false, the law will punish him ; if what he
 knows to be true, he should be allowed to
 prove it : then all is fair to both parties.

“ It never has its full force, if the author
 “ of it is known or stands forth ; for the
 “ unworthiness of any man lessens the
 “ strength of his objections. This is a full
 “ answer to those who require the name of
 “ a satirical poet.”—If this is true, the
 satirists of former times have done little
 good, and our author must be the most
 efficacious that has ever written ; but even
 his dogmatical stile will not convince the
 public that they have not a right to know the
 name of every author ; and it is far from a
 full satisfaction to those who suffer an injury,
 to be told it is for the public good that they
 should not know from whom it comes ; to
 be both criminal and judge is rather too much
 at once.

“ But

“ But I may ask with confidence,—Is
 “ there, in this work on the Pursuits of Li-
 “ terature, any sentence or any sentiment,
 “ by which the mind may be depraved, de-
 “ graded, or corrupted? Is there a principle
 “ of classical criticism in any part of it, which
 “ is not just and defensible by the greatest
 “ masters of ancient and legitimate compo-
 “ sition?” I answer, that the whole tendency
 of his book is to deprave, degrade, and cor-
 rupt: to inculcate that men and states are no
 longer subject to improvement, that moral
 and political information are at a stand,—is to
 prepare them for ages of darkness and error.
 Human nature cannot stand still:—*Non pro-*
gredi, est regredi. The faults of his criticisms
 I will afterwards point out.

“ Is there any passage which pandars to
 “ the vitiated taste, or to the polluted affec-
 “ tions and passions of bad men?” For his
 purity and his puerility, I recommend him
 to the readers of *Martial's Cosconius*:

*At tua, Cosconi, venerandaque sanctaque verba,
 A pueris debent, virginibusque legi. Lib. iii. ch. 69.*

“ Is there any idle, depreciating declama-
 “ tion against the real and solid advantages

D

“ of

“ of birth, fortune, learning, wit, talents, and high station ?” But he has neglected to shew what are the real and solid advantages of birth and fortune.

“ If they are inclined to *indict* any part of my work as *libellous*, it will be incumbent on them to contradict the great sage of the law, * who declares, that *In a CRIMINAL PROSECUTION, the tendency which all libels have to create animosities and disturb the publick peace, IS THE WHOLE which the law considers.*” Since he has appealed to Blackstone, by Blackstone he must be tried ; and Blackstone will condemn him. Can any thing tend more to create animosities and disturb the public peace, than anonymous satire extensively applied, and extensively diffused ? Does not he, who feels that he is injured in his character or fame by an enemy in secret, look with suspicion and distrust on every man he meets ? Is not the confidence of familiar intercourse mortally wounded, when no man of any celebrity can feel at ease in any company, lest the man that sits next him should be the man that has defamed him ? the satirists of old were known and

* Blackstone's Comment. book 4. ch. 11.

and avoided by the vicious and the foolish, who could cry out when they saw them, *fœnum habet in cornu* ;* but now even the virtuous are not safe from the danger of being misrepresented. Let the author boast of his zeal and public spirit, his love of the constitution, his purity and benevolence, yet I will venture to affirm, that no Jacobin that ever wrote, has done so much to injure private happiness and disturb the peace of society, than this zealous advocate of virtue and morality.—When he speaks of public books, he should not include the Priapus, which was never published.

“ In this work, I have not violated the
 “ precepts of Christianity, or the law of the
 “ land ; and till I have done both, or either,
 “ it is not in the power of any man to de-
 “ grade my character and reputation with
 “ my country.” That he has not violated
 the precepts of christianity is false ; for its
 great precept ‘ do unto others as you wish
 them to do unto you’ is violated by anony-
 mous slander ; but as its language is not al-
 ways so gentle, our Saviour’s reproofs of the
 Pharisees are the model he has chosen for the

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stile

* Horat. Sat. 1. lib. 4. l. 34.

file of his censure : with respect to the law of the land, it is not known how far a man may go without being deemed libellous.

“ If I have drawn any supposed characters, without a name or designation, I have done no more than Theophrastus or La Bruyere.” He has done much more than these writers, for he has mentioned many individuals by name, and drawn characters of others whom he durst not name, which no one can possibly mistake.*

“ The ‘*sume superbiam*’ † of a poet is seldom severely examined. It is an extravaganza at most, and understood as such.” But the ‘*sume superbiam*’ of an anonymous writer is truly ridiculous ; it is an extravaganza, and laughed at as such.

“ I may add, that it would be difficult to analyze one of the most finished fatires in our language, I mean Pope’s Two Dialogues, or, as they are strangely called, The Epilogue to the Satires.” I do not see why they are called the Epilogue, more strangely, than the other dialogue is called the

* *Vide* Note (o) to Dialogue 2d. and the Character of Dr Morosophos.

† Horat. Od. lib. iii. p. 30. v. 14.

the Prologue to the Satires ; for prologue an epilogue are no more than introduction and conclusion of any performance.

“ I am represented as having threatened “ any person who makes enquiry after me “ or my name.” He has threatened: when he says, to those who enquire after his name, ‘ there is a darkness which may be felt,’ what is that but to say, he will make them suffer for their temerity.

“ I maintain it boldly ; no man has a right “ to demand either my name or my situation.” For an anonymous writer to talk of his boldness, is rather ludicrous ; but notwithstanding this, I maintain it with more than equal boldness, that every man has a right to know by whom he is injured or insulted.

“ For I believe I have no real enemies, but “ the lovers of confusion and the troublers of “ states.” It is not easy here to see the force of this sentence as an inference, nor its truth, as a simple proposition ; I believe, it is in my power to tell him of many whom he has made his enemies, who never have lain under the imputation of being *troublers of states, or adversaries to any establishment.*

“ If

“ If I am forced indeed to descend into the
 “ lower regions of sorrow and confusion,
 “ among the perturbed spirits of anarchy
 “ and democracy, I shall hope for the safe
 “ conduct of the Sibyll. She might produce
 “ the branch to the ferryman of France and
 “ Tartarus. I would wish her to exhibit
 “ this Poem, as the ‘ *Donum fatalis virgæ,*
 “ *longo post tempore visum.*” Into what
 strange confusion does his itch for quotation
 lead him: first he is *Diomedes* before the
 walls of Troy, then he is *Eneas* descending
 to hell: But in this last character, I doubt,
 his branch will be of little use to him, for it
 is not a branch of olive.

“ My book is open to all the accumulated
 “ severity of public criticism, and public re-
 “ prehension. I shrink from neither of them.
 “ When I am wrong, (I have never been so
 “ intentionally) I will correct myself, and I
 “ have done so frequently. In a field so ex-
 “ tensive, candour, I think, will allow that
 “ my mistakes have not been very numer-
 “ ous.” It is not his mistakes that will bring
 upon him the accumulated severity of public
 criticism, but his intentional faults, the ego-
 tism and arrogance of his manner, the affect-
 ed

ed pomposity of his stile, the bigotry of his principles. *Verseification*, does not signify *verse*, as our author has used it, but the *structure of verse* ; at least I apprehend so.

“ I offer the poetry to those who are conversant with the strength, simplicity, and dignity of Dryden and Pope, and them alone. I submit both my Poems, ‘ The Pursuits of Literature, and The Imperial Epistle,’ in this spirit and with this confidence to the public. There are men (and women too) who understand. But as to the lovers of exotic poetry, I refer them to the Botanic Garden of Dr Darwin. My plants and flowers are produced and cherished by the natural invigorating influence of the common sun ; I have not raised them by artificial heat.” To speak of these qualities, belonging equally to Pope and Dryden, shews a want of judgment not to be tolerated in a man who sets up for a guide of the public taste. Dryden certainly has them all, and Pope has strength and dignity ; but Dryden’s is the strength of a doric, Pope’s of a corinthian pillar ; he is elegant, delicate, and refined ; he is any thing but simple. The character of simplicity belongs most

most to Parnell of any poet in our language, and among the ancients to Theocritus. Has Pope any resemblance to these writers? I think not. If our author does, I am sorry to differ from him: But I differ from him yet more, if *he* thinks he possesses any of the qualities as a poet, he has just enumerated; and it is somewhat singular, that all the faults which he has attributed to Dr Darwin's poetry, are to be found in his own prose, which is a garden of exotics from all countries.

" I would shew, that I am strictly impartial." Does he understand what the word impartial means?

" It is to misunderstand or to misrepresent me, when it is asserted that I attack alike friends and foes. I attack not man in his *individual* capacity." This is false; for he has attacked many men for things which relate to them only as individuals, witness Pepper Arden's person, and Dr Lawrence's poverty. He has never been accused of being too severe on his friends; his great error is, that he is too blind to their faults.

" I will never give a proof of my spirit at the expence of my understanding." Let him

him rather say at the expence of his person ; for I believe there are a good many cudgels ready for him.

“ I would not have you, or any man, think, that I enter into a defence of my work, as if I thought it required one.”—Matchless arrogance ! The egotism and vanity of this man are beyond all bearing : it was not thus that the great satirists of former times spoke of themselves. I have counted in one page, (p. 16.) the word *I* no less than seventeen times repeated, and *my* five times, which is more by two-thirds than can be found in any other writer, and twenty-two times more than any Mr *Nobody* has a right to use.

“ My countenance is unaltered.” So is that of any man who wears a mask : the pompous egotism of this page is wound up by a quotation from Livy,* which, in the general stile of his quotations, is made out with many words of his own ; as he has chosen to give only a part, I will give the rest, and the reader may judge which best applies to him : the historian speaks of Appius Claudius, a

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* *Semel causam dixi, (vel iterum dicturus) quo semper agere omnia solitus sum, ACCUSATORIO SPIRITU.* Liv. lib. 2. Sect. 61.

constant enemy and hater of the people :—

‘ Tribunos et plebem et suum judicium pro nihilo habebat : illum non minæ plebis, non senatus preces percellere unquam potuere, non modo ut vestem mutaret, aut supplex prensaret homines ; sed ne ut ex consueta quidem asperitate orationis (quum ad populum agenda causa esset) aliquid leniret atque submitteret : idem habitus oris, eadem contumacia in vultu, idem in oratione spiritus erat : adeo ut magna pars plebis Appium non minus reum timeret, quam consulem timuerat. Semel causam dixit quo semper agere omnia solitus erat accusatorio spiritu. ’—Lib.

ii. Sect. 61. With respect to the propriety of quotation, I mean to speak hereafter ; as to the rules of it, as established by the use of the best writers, I will say a few words now : historical and philosophical quotation should be literal, exact, and complete, both as to the words and the spirit of the author, or it may be used to bad purposes : to quotation that is intended only to adorn or illustrate, a greater latitude is allowed ; words may be used with a different application from what they had originally, and the whole of a passage need not be produced, but then the quoter is subject to have the remainder turned against him : humorous quotation admits of still greater liberty ;

liberty ; a writer is permitted to do any thing but change the words, or put in others ; but this our Author has not hesitated to do even in serious quotations, which totally destroys his credibility from henceforth. Another thing required in all quotations, is to be exact in the references.

“ I hate deserters of their duty, * on any principle whatever :” and so do I : for once we agree. Though the cause of the seceders has been pleaded with as much argument as it will admit by that incorruptible patriot, the Rev. Christopher Wyvill, it is not to be defended ; the question is a plain one, and reducible to a few words ; let those men resign their seats whom circumstances prevent from doing their duty ; if they will not, let them persevere as the apostle says, ‘ by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true,’ † ‘ let them fight the good fight, let them be stedfast even to the end :’ ‡ it is by perseverance only that the best cause can be gained, and sometimes even the worst. They occupy the place of others whom their constituents might choose ; and they

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* H. of C. Nov. 1797.

† 2 Cor. vi. 8.

‡ 2 Tim. iv. ~

they neglect the only means that is left, during the silence of the press, of speaking to the people.—Unless Mr Fox could have prevailed on all the rest of opposition to secede with him, his argument of the sanction given to the measures of ministry by a debate, falls to the ground; for they are now generally debated, though not much at length: his eloquence might have shewn them in their full deformity.

“ But I suppose some Statesmen think that
 “ there is a laudable obliquity and a season-
 “ able fear. For my own part I shall not, on
 “ this occasion, invade the retreat of St Ann’s
 “ Hill, or violate the purity of Drury-Lane.
 “ If *such* Statesmen are resolved to free at
 “ once, both the Senate and the Throne, the
 “ † ‘*Sævi Spiracula Ditis*’ are open to them;
 “ they may descend in safety, and disburthen
 “ the land.” This passage is in the true
 style of its author: it is in some parts unintelligible, in others brutal, and in all conceited. That any man should think obliquity of conduct to be laudable, is impossible; it may appear useful, but never right: his affected delicacy towards the retreat of St Ann’s

† Virg. *Æn.* vii. 568.

Ann's Hill, only serves to display the deep malignity of his sentiments, against the most enlightened statesmen the world can at present boast ; and his allusion to Drury-Lane is a far-fetched sneer at the proprietor of that theatre : but when he tells us that such statesmen may go to the devil, if they please, he shews, in full light, the bitter rancour of his spirit, that could rejoice to deprive the world of the most splendid talents, merely because they are exerted in a cause to which he is opposed. If he speaks only in metaphor, it is foolish ; if he is serious, it is wicked : but if the land must be disburthened, let it be of those by whom it has been burthened.

“ On the broad general question of the
 “ time, the public esteem has been commen-
 “ surate with the royal approbation.” A
 happy imitation of the affected phraseology
 of the *World* ; and a strong violation of that
 plainness and simplicity of style which the
 best writers have exemplified, and the best
 critics have enforced.

“ The noble Marquis, who is no more in
 “ office, may brood safely over beads and
 “ relicks. There is some propriety in this
 “ amusement. It is pleasing to preserve the
 “ me-

“ memorial of departed dignity. In my opinion, the Moor’s head might have adorned our coin with the royal Gallick lillies, though the Sovereignty of France and of Corfica is passed.” The malignity of the author’s temper is perhaps never more evident than in this cold sneer at the Marquis of Buckingham, for his protection of a set of wretched emigrant priests: the rest of the passage requires an interpreter.

“ I was not formed to wait in the anti-chamber of a Duke of Lerma, or a Don Calderone.” It is not my intention to become a commentator to our author’s works, or to explain his obscure allusions; but sometimes, when it suits my purpose, I will pursue what he has begun, when it does not go to any great length; to many of my readers it will save much trouble, to be told that the Duke of Lerma was the imperious minister of Philip the Third of Spain, that Don Rodrigo Calderona was the minister’s favourite; and that, after enjoying and misusing the utmost plentitude of power, they both experienced an ignominious and deserved death.—The character of the latter is thus drawn by a living author, who finished *Watson’s Life of Philip*

Philip III. ‘ His temper, naturally violent
 ‘ and impetuous, was unrestrained by any of
 ‘ those condescensions and regards which are
 ‘ so necessary in his situation, to soothe jea-
 ‘ lousy and disarm the rancour of envy ; he
 ‘ mingled in all the intrigues of court, *he de-*
 ‘ *lighted in the exercise of power, his favour was*
 ‘ *the surest road to preferment, and this he distri-*
 ‘ *buted for the most part, according to his own*
 ‘ *fancy and caprice, and without any regard to*
 ‘ *merit or pretensions ;* he had audiences as if
 ‘ he had been a sovereign prince, held fre-
 ‘ quent consultations, and shared, in one
 ‘ word, the administration of public affairs
 ‘ with the Duke of Lerma. The haughti-
 ‘ ness and impetuosity of Don Rodirigo was
 ‘ contrasted, by the decent moderation which
 ‘ appeared in the whole conduct and deport-
 ‘ ment of his father.’ Vol. ii. 156. I will
 only add that two years of imprisonment sof-
 tened his temper, and that his patience under
 his afflictions cast a lustre on his latter end,
 which never brightened his prosperity. Our
 author, I suppose, has never heard of him
 but in Gil Blas, for he spells his name with
 an *e* at the end ; historians who understand
 Spanish, with an *a*.

“ But

“ But if the laurel, which I have *now*
 “ planted, should thicken round the temple
 “ of my retirement, the pillars will support
 “ it. The materials are solid, and the ground
 “ is firm.” For ever writing in metaphors :
 the materials of his temple, as well as the
 laurel, I suppose, are meant to allude to his
 character and talents ; if so, what confusion
 has he created, with his pillars, and his tem-
 ples, and his laurels, which, in one passage,
 are to mean the same and different things?

“ I have indeed a few memoirs by me,
 “ written in other days and with other
 “ hopes, and if I could polish the stile, and
 “ reduce them a little into form, I am con-
 “ vinced they would not be uninteresting.—
 “ ‘ Le Roi et ses Ministres peutetre se fai-
 “ roient lire ces Memoires, qui assurement ne
 “ sont pas ceux d’un ignorant.’ But let this
 “ pass for the present.” This passage is ano-
 ther proof of his high opinion of his own
 consequence, and his quotation is another
 instance of his talent in that way ; it is of
 his own making, for I neither find nor re-
 member any such passage in *Gil Blas*, the
 book he quotes. These memoirs will, per-
 haps, let us into a secret ; for it will be diffi-
 cult

cult for him to publish memoirs, without letting the world know who he is, or leading to something that may betray him.

“ I am for practicable politicks. I would
 “ not be driven into measures from which
 “ there is no retreat. I smile when I am told
 “ of love and hate in politicians and mini-
 “ sters. These are passions which they never
 “ felt. Circumstance alone unite and sepa-
 “ rate them.” A happy specimen of stile ;
 five short sentences together : there is at
 times an oracular brevity in the author’s
 manner, which he wishes to have thought
 conceals something, to give him consequence.
 —That the generality of politicians conceal
 their love and hatred when it suits their in-
 terest, every man knows ; but that they do
 not feel these emotions as well as other men,
 our author has for the first time discovered :
 he looks only to the present ministry, and
 thinks he is drawing a character of human
 nature, at all times. That they do not love
 nor hate each other, is true ; but that there
 are no men whom they do not hate, is false.
 —“ Suffers the nature of an insurrection.”
Julius Cæsar, act ii. scene 1.

“ I look around me. I look to human ac-

F

“ tions,

" tions, and to human principles. I consider
 " again and again, what is the nature and
 " effect of learning and of instruction ; what
 " is the doctrine of evidence, and the founda-
 " tion of truth. I ask myself, are all these
 " changed ? Have the moral and the natural
 " laws of God to his creatures another basis ?
 " Has the lapse of fifty years made an altera-
 " tion in HIM, who is declared to be THE
 " SAME to-day, yesterday, and for ever ? *
 " Can the violence, the presumption, the
 " audacity, the arrogance, the tyranny of
 " man, drunk with self-idolatry and tempo-
 " rary success, change the nature and essence
 " of GOD and of his works, by calling good
 " evil and evil good ? I am told, that human
 " reason is nearly advanced to full perfec-
 " tion ; I am assured, that she is arrived at
 " the haven where she would be.† I again
 " look around me. I ask, where is that ha-
 " ven ? where is that steady gale which has
 " conducted her ? I listen ; but it is to the
 " tempest : I cast my view abroad ; but the
 " ocean

* Heb. xiii. 8. By inverting the words, he has destroy-
 ed the harmony of the period : the apostle writes '*the same
 yesterday, to-day, and for ever :*' which is in regular pro-
 gression. Our author makes *to-day* come before *yesterday*.

† Psalm cvii. 30.

“ ocean is every where perturbed. I pause
 “ again. Perhaps, it is *the wind and storm*
 “ *fulfilling HIS word!*” Is this argument?
 or is it declamation? or is it not downright
 folly? if he can ever be brought to think
 that these things are the deeds of Providence,
 as, in the last words, he seems to intimate,
 how can he either complain or be dismayed?
 The quotation is from the 146th Psalm, and
 is ‘ stormy wind’ not ‘ wind and storm.’

“ I resume the reflections of suffering hu-
 “ manity amid the wreck of intellect. This
 “ was not the ancient character of Philoso-
 “ phy. The lovers of wisdom, in the best
 “ ages of Athens and of Rome, always dis-
 “ coursed with reverence and submission to
 “ the Author and Governor of the world.”
 If he means that none of these Philosophers
 indulged themselves in scepticism, I must tell
 him, he has yet to read Cicero’s Philosophical
 Works, and the lives of the Philosophers by
 Diogenes Laertius. On many such as these
 the light of Revelation did shine without en-
 lightening them, according to our author’s
 wish: and it is the boast of the apostle, ‘ that
 God had chosen the weak things of the
 world to confound the mighty:’ 1 Cor. i. 27.

“ If to their ribaldry they join folly and
 “ gross ignorance, they should be driven
 “ from our fellowship with contempt. The
 “ continued labours of the arch Theoma-
 “ chist of the age, the records of that perpe-
 “ tual conflict which he maintained during
 “ the course of fifty years of a long and im-
 “ pious life, against the spiritual * kingdoms
 “ of God and of his Christ, and the memo-
 “ rials of his desolating days, will all be en-
 “ tombed in the French Pantheon with the
 “ mouldering remnant of his bones † ‘ Dust
 “ to dust: ashes to ashes.’ He sowed unto
 “ the flesh, and of the flesh he and his disci-
 “ ples have reaped death and corruption.” ‡
 It was not thus that the Saviour of mankind
 and his great apostle fought to convince the
 learned among the Jews and the Greeks:
 they preached to them patiently; they were
 instant in season, and out of season; they re-
 proved, rebuked, and exhorted, confident of
 the truth of their doctrine: § and are the
 infidels of the present day, coldly to be
 dismissed with contempt? this argues either
 too

* Rev. xi. 15.

† *Vide* the Burial Service; but the author, according to custom, has inverted the position of the sentence.

‡ Gal. vi. 28.

§ 2 Tim. iv. 2.

too great confidence, or great distrust. Let the Christian philosopher, if he believes his religion to be true, rather imitate the unwearied labours of the arch Theomachist, who for fifty years never remitted his literary warfare against the strength and the weakness of Christianity : time only can decide whether his efforts were directed by a spirit of impiety or sound wisdom : neither our dogmatical author, nor any individual, is a competent judge of a point which requires the test of ages to determine. Our Saviour was crucified as a blasphemer.

“ All the minor powers of infidelity, anarchy, sedition, rebellion, and democracy, may yet be dispersed *in England* ; from their leaders Voltaire, D’Alembert, and Condorcet, to the vulgar illiterate blasphemy of Thomas Paine, and the contemptible nonsense of William Godwin. I feel for mankind when they are insulted by such writers. I make common cause with my fellow-creatures, and call upon them to rally round the constitution of our human nature, and to support its dignity.” Our author has not told us how they are to be dispersed, but he has given us room to guess ;
there

there is an engine which he admires more than the press, that might do great things ; he longs to set it to work : it is an engine powerful for a time, but not irresistible ; it may stifle the truth, but never can suppress it ; for truth has an elasticity that will always rebound, while error can never long prevail unless it is supported ; error therefore need not be suppressed ; truth cannot, tho' perhaps it may never be generally prevalent.— But I will not rest in loose generalities ; I will define what I mean by truth and error : truth is the nature and relation of things to each other ; the knowledge of these is philosophy, which is divided into natural and moral ; the means of arriving at this knowledge, is in the first instance experiment ; in the second instruction : philosophy, thus defined, is limited to the things of the natural and moral world : to this, error is the opposite.—To act according to the moral relations of things is virtue ; the contrary is vice, which proceeds from ignorance. Thus have I attempted briefly to define the sum of human philosophy : to the moral part, if it be objected that a sufficient motive is wanting for action, I will answer, that happiness, which is the

the object of every man's conduct, is motive sufficient ; and if a sanction is required, there can be none higher than the dispensation of nature. I will now return to our author, with his minor and his major powers of democracy, and remark, that with singular ingenuity he has included the greater in the lesser, when he tells us, that the minor powers of infidelity might be dispersed, from Voltaire down to Godwin and Paine ; this is liberal in the design, and ingenious in the execution : it is a pity it is not quite intelligible.

“ From writers of this character, my
 “ thoughts are directed to the professors of
 “ *that superstitious corruption* of Christianity,
 “ which *originally* gave occasion to those at-
 “ tempts, to which it has pleased Providence
 “ to permit a temporary success, to scourge
 “ the nations of Europe. I am sure the plain
 “ simplicity of the Protestant religion of
 “ England could never have suggested so
 “ daring, so extensive a project. I have
 “ therefore spoken at large of the Roman
 “ Catholic religion, *and* its professors, *and*
 “ the emigrants *and* French priests.”——
 From infidelity to popery, is not the com-
 mon

mon transition, rather the reverse; but I give our author credit for seeing any connection between the two. This is perhaps the most extraordinary passage in the whole book, for the arrogance, illiberality, and ignorance, it displays. Our author is here hand in glove with Providence: in short, nothing is hid from him; he can tell to an iota the causes of all the great events in the world. Popery gave occasion to the French revolution; the success of that revolution is only temporary, and meant to punish the rest of Europe who have corrupted christianity, I suppose: but the best of all this is, that our author knows and is convinced that the protestant religion is plain and simple, that there are no difficulties in its creed, no follies in its discipline, no contradictions in its liturgy, and that our bishops can boast an uninterrupted succession from Christ and his apostles: so thought the papists, and so think they still; and who is to decide between us? but I had forgot, our author is the judge, and all is right. Alas! I doubt we have no infallible criterion but time for all the opinions of men; with our author, their truth or error depends on their being established or not; and
if

if he had lived in the days of popery, he must have died a papist: so much for his judgment. Let him consult Longinus and Quinctilian, to be instructed how the stile of a writer is enervated by the frequent use of copulatives.

“ From some observations I have heard
 “ and seen on this part of my work, you may
 “ remember I was tempted to think that I
 “ had advanced something new on this sub-
 “ ject. I am sure the principles are as old
 “ and as moderate as those of the Reforma-
 “ tion. I know that every page of our his-
 “ tory confirms their truth.” I advise him
 not to be too forward in claiming any resemblance to the reformers, lest he should be suspected of borrowing some of the moderation of John Knox, of Calvin, or Elizabeth. As to the example of history, it is nothing: for how can the history of the reformation be compared to the present times: are the papists as numerous, as powerful, as sore from recent injury, as they were then? what he has advanced on the subject of popery is very old, and therefore does not apply to our times.

“ I only declared and pronounced solemnly
 “ in the face of my country, that A COL-

“LEGE OF ROMISH PRIESTS of a religion
 “hostile in principle and in action too,
 “whenever it has the power, against the
 “established church of his kingdom, *should*
 “*not be set upon a hill*, and authorised and
 “maintained by the ministers of the crown,
 “and the publick money of the land.” Our
 author’s violence against the Romish Clergy
 somewhat resembles in spirit, tho’ I will do
 him the justice to say, not in language, a
 coarse invective under the quaint title of
 Gideon’s Cake of Barley Meal ; there is the
 same intolerance, the same narrowness, the
 same virulence in both : but in the heat
 of his zeal against Popery, he has overlooked
 the real grounds of danger, which is in the
 tendency our own clergy have shewn to a
 nearer connection with the Romish church :
 since the commencement of the present war
 they have declared what spirit they are of ;
 a spirit which resembles that of their papist
 brethren in former times, in aiding the de-
 signs of the state : in unqualified terms they
 have preached up bloodshed and murder ;
 they have forgot that they are ministers of a
 church whose foundation is peace, the
 church of Christ ; and plainly shewn that
 they

they are ready to be ministers of any church that will pay them ; no matter to them how christianity is violated, if it serve their purposes. In addition to this, others of them have shewn a strong leaning towards popery in their doctrines ; I allude to a sermon preached at St Mary's, Oxford, by Henry Best, of Magdalen College, 1794 ; to a pamphlet called Hopes and Expectations, by Faulder, 1793 ; to a Series of Discourses, by Robert Foley of Oriel College, 1795, where the same infallibility is claimed for the protestant, as for the popish church ; to Sermons by Robert Gray, preached at the Bampton Lecture, and to the Essay on the church by the Rev. Mr Jones of Neyland ; in all these there is a strong tendency to unite with the Catholics on moderate principles, that is to say, the Protestants invite the Catholics to soften some of their most obnoxious doctrines, and they are willing to concede a few insignificant points, for the sake of adopting the arbitrary principles of the Catholics both in church and state ; but if this invitation is refused, they have demonstrated that they have a religion of their own, that will equally answer their purpose. See Monthly Review for 1797,

part 1st, p. 81. Their object is to destroy the right of private judgment on which our Protestant church was erected, and to prevent the propagation of religious enquiry by the means of an infallible church. If there is any ground of alarm, it is here, and our author, in the excess of his zeal, has not, to use a vulgar saying, put the saddle on the right horse; he has neglected to accuse our own clergy of making the first advances, who are therefore the most dangerous, and deserve most to be blamed. For some strong facts on this subject, I refer my readers to a letter to the Marquis of Buckingham, Owen, 1796; and lastly, for a proof of this popish spirit among our clergy, I refer to Daubigny's Guide to the Church, lately published.— Here I leave our author for the present on this popish subject, to dream of racks, torture, and inquisitions: should popery be re-established in his life time, he stands a chance to be first martyr to the *odium theologicum* of popish priests, which he has taken such pains to excite; but I will cease to terrify him, for between popery and atheism, I doubt the poor man is never easy day nor night.

“ But, ‘ though I give all my goods (said
“ an

“ an Apostle) to feed the poor and the distressed, and have not *Charity*, it profiteth me nothing.’ What does he mean? he surely means something. Alms alone, it seems, however liberal, however extended, neither are, nor can be, the whole or the essence of christian charity.” Let us here remark how the words of the apostle, 1 Cor. xiii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, are made to suit the designs of our author: he quotes a part of a passage, and then twists it to his own purpose, so that the general comprehensive philanthropy of the apostle is frittered down till it means at last nothing but constitutional toleration; a meaning unknown to the extensive benevolence of christianity: remark, reader, the process; he sagely observes, that when the apostle speaks of charity, he means something, and that he cannot mean alms as the whole of charity; so far I will agree with him; but here we separate, for when he talks of its being a principle of general safety, of discernment, of prudence, and of guarded virtue, he speaks of something suited to the worldly spirit of a politician, but not to a follower of Christ, whose precept to be wise as serpents, was not a general maxim of worldly

worldly prudence, but a single admonition to his apostles to flee persecution, till they had fulfilled their mission, the conversion of the Jewish people.

“ Romish Baronets will be busy, and Romish Priests will meddle. Perhaps the Secretary of that Society knows, whether these hints are true and justifiable.” If the only Romish Baronet who is a member of the antiquarian society is conscious of deserving these insinuations, he must be a weak man indeed : if he is not, I trust he will, some day or other, have an opportunity of exposing to contempt, in his proper person, the man who throws them out.

“ If I am wrong, I fear, I must continue so. I have yet seen no argument to shake my conviction.” This passage is a sufficient clue to most of our author’s opinions, moral and political ; an invincible obstinacy and conceit : he never alters an opinion he has once embraced.

“ I have been under the necessity, at least as I thought, of appealing for illustration to writers of all ages and in various languages.” Concerning the propriety of this constant appeal to other men’s writings,

I have frequently had my doubts, and am now more than ever inclined to dispute it: tho' I do not deny the advantages of a classical education, I must yet be allowed to reprobate the frequency of classical quotation. The ancients, it is true, have left us many models in poetry, history, oratory, criticism, and philosophy, which will never be surpassed either in the present or future ages, if we are to judge by the progress of the world since their times; but the use we are to derive from them is, to form our taste and enrich our ideas, not to plaister our writings; for he who best studies and understands, will not be most forward to quote them: it shews he has read, but not digested them; it shews that his opinions are not his own; and is a greater evidence of a good memory than a strong judgment: it is moreover, in all works that are intended to be popular, an invincible obstacle to their being generally understood: to translate words, phrases, or sentiments, from another language into our own, by which it is improved, is the true end of reading the classics; but to transplant passages, is like patching instead of weaving, the one can be done by any bungler who has the materials,

rials, the other requires some dexterity. No point of mere opinion can be decided by quotation ; for the wisdom of the ancients is on one side as well as the other : it is therefore a bad substitute for argument ; for it is easy to find a passage in some author to suit any purpose. But is quotation never admissible ? it will be said ; undoubtedly it is on many occasions : in history it is indispensable, but in works merely of opinion it must be used sparingly, and then, rather to illustrate than to prove. Dryden, Johnson, and Junius, have shewn that genius has little need to be supported by quotations, and their writings may serve as models how they are to be used : our author by his prodigality of them, is bringing us back to the antiquated foppery of Jeremy Taylor and his contemporaries, from which the vigour of Dryden, and the courtly elegance of Sprat had freed us ; for they first gave the examples of a pure page, and a clear margin ; the one had no need of pedantry, the other was afraid of it : since their time, we have been preserved from this inundation of learned trash, and the pure stream of genius has flowed undisturbed by quotation, till Parr and Wakefield,
(whose

(whose names I mention with respect) unwisely poured their exuberant learning thro' their richest pages : but let me not place these men by the side of our author for any thing but contrast : their faults spring from riches, his from extreme poverty ; they have no need of the aid of foreign ornament ; their stile and their ideas have only the faults of redundancy ; he is for ever on the stretch to be, what he can never arrive at ; and as to quotation, theirs is the murmur of a gentle stream, compared to his, which resembles the inundation of a torrent.

“ No man ever felt the power of poetry, if he refused his homage to Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso ; I mean, if their language was familiar to him.” To refuse our homage to the Italian poets, and to our author's pedantry, are two things totally different ; tho' he has chosen to put them together.

“ In their primal poet there is an originality and a hardihood of antiquity.” For the use of the word primal I refer to Johnson's Dictionary : he says it may be used in poetry : and this is one fault of our author's stile ; it is too poetical, too metaphorical ; his

poetry is prose, and his prose is poetry.—

*Est enim proxima poetis et quodammodo carmen solutum,
et scribitur ad narrandum non ad probandum.*

Quinct. Lib. x. 1.

“ Frons læta parum et dejecto lumina
“ vultu.” To this quotation he has given
no reference ; it is from the 6th Æneid l. 813.

“ Ὡςπερ ἀπο τῶν ευωδιστατῶν λειμῶνων αὐρὰ τις ἡδεια
“ ἀπ’ αὐτῆς φέρεται. Such is the harmonious prose
“ which distinguishes the critical writings of
“ the great Halicarnassian. Epist. ad Cn.
“ Pompeium. de Platone. Sect. 2.” People of
nice ears will easily distinguish how the har-
mony of Dionysius’s prose is destroyed by the
repetition of *απ’* instead of *ἐξ*, in the original,—
the sound and the meaning are equally in-
jured.

“ The glory of Spain, Alonzo d’Ercilla.”
To be the glory of Spain, as a poet, is no very
great praise : but as I have no knowledge of
the Spanish language, I will not venture to
speak of him, but refer my readers to the
French *Dictionnaire Historique*, a work on
which it is generally safe to rely for its judg-
ment of Authors.

“ I am told, I am forgiven for my Latin ;
“ but for the Greek, not so easily. In this
“ parti-

“ particular indeed, I am rather surprised
 “ that no man of *wit* has said of my notes,
 “ *They are Greek invocations to call fools into a*
 “ *circle.* Certainly there will be Halos round
 “ the brightest luminaries; and it must be
 “ confessed, that many of my notes have
 “ such a circular appearance.” Had our
 author finished with his quotation from
 Shakespeare,* he might have saved his credit;
 but to shew his learning, which I will prove
 is not very deep, he has written nearly a
 whole page, which is hardly intelligible: if
 by the ‘brightest luminaries’ he means his
 own writings, I fear his vanity has outrun
 his judgment; but what he means by his
 notes having a circular appearance, I hope
 he will explain in his next edition of the
 translations: what any theologian has to
 do with the validity of his ordination, or
 what connection there is between ordination
 and Greek learning, I leave to the clergy to
 explain; but I believe the only Greek re-
 quired for that, is the Greek Testament.—
 Next comes a fine flourish about the Council
 of Florence, which some theologians have
 never heard of: if my reader wishes for
 some very pleasant information respecting

H 2

this

* As you like it. Act ii.

this Council of Florence, they will find it in Mr Gibbon's last volume, and some more particulars, which he has not related, in Hody's Account of the illustrious Greeks ; in the Lives of Bessarion and Chrysoloras ; but our author's information is from Mr *Marsh's* translation of Michaelis, vol. 2. whose words he has partly copied and partly confused, p. 168. He says, ' It is said by many of the learned, that at the Council of Florence held in 1439, with a view of establishing an union between the Greek and Latin churches, a resolution was formed that the Greeks should alter their manuscripts after the Latin.' This is plain and intelligible ; but hear our author, ' the Council of Florence in 1439, when the Greek and Latin churches proposed that the Greeks should alter their manuscripts from the Latin.' It is rather singular that what was so ignominious to the one party, should be proposed by both ; in a dispute of this kind, where there was no third party to decide, both may agree ; but it is not very likely that both should propose : but as the gentleman has introduced the subject, I will pursue it, and tell him, and those who do not know it, that no such proposal was ever
either

either made or agreed to ; and if he had read Michaelis a little farther, he must have found that it was his opinion, that the whole story arose from a disingenuous fiction of Erasmus, to cover a defect of his own edition of the Greek Test. in which many passages were altered from the Latin, *vide* Mich. vol. ii. p. 173 and 444 on the editions of the Greek Test. As an additional proof that this is an invention of Erasmus, we do not find it mentioned by any writer of the history of that council. Mr Gibbon, whose erudition, penetration, and accuracy, were unequalled, has never noticed the circumstance ; so that it happens that this celebrated *Fædus cum Græcis*, so well known to the critics, so far as it related to the alteration of MSS. was not known at all, and turns out to be nothing more than a forgery. But our author goes on with Michaelis, and talks of the *capita argumentorum*, in the preface to Erasmus's edition of the New Testament, as if he had read it : when we examine a little further it appears he has never seen it, for he quotes it very pompously, Nov. Test. by Erasmus, in 1595, 5th Edition :— Now Erasmus died in 1536, and published his last edition of the Testament in 1535.

Is

Is it not very singular that his error should have passed unobserved through nine editions? if our author takes the trouble to look over them, he must have remarked the inaccuracy, had the circumstance been familiar to him.

“ And if I were to adduce from the great
 “ Erasmus, my ‘Capita argumentorum con-
 “ tra morosos quosdam et indoctos’ I should
 “ be reminded by Dr Parr, that I have not
 “ the erudition of Erasmus, *or* the gentle
 “ manners of the serene Sepulveda. Mr
 “ Knight would remand me to the Greek
 “ alphabet, (to any one, I hope but his own)
 “ and his modesty would attempt some
 “ jucundity from the Lusus Priapi. I will
 “ endure them all. I have patience and pity
 “ too.” Should Dr Parr deign to think of
 him at all, he will, no doubt, tell him that he
 has not the erudition of Erasmus; and I will
 tell him that he has the manners of the serene
Sepulveda, who was a persecutor and a bigot,
vide Dict. Hist. but even this expression he
 has borrowed from Michaelis, who says, v. ii.
 p. 170. ‘but Erasmus had not the gentle
 manners of *Sepulveda*’; let our author re-
 member that the conjunction *nor*, always fol-
 lows

lows the adverb *not*. I have no patience with our author ; but I have pity for the public, when I see them imposed on by such pompous ignorance.—‘ In that which every joint supplieth’ is a quotation from Eph. iv. 16.

“ An obscure writer on the Boroughs,
“ ‘ The sad historian of that tainted plain.’ ”
—This is adapted, not quoted, from Goldsmith ; who, in his deserted village, has these words :

“ The sad historian of the pensive plain.”

“ He may perhaps improve in calculation;
“ but I think it will be some time before his
“ anti-professional prattle will impose on an-
“ other boy-committee on a contested elec-
“ tion.” This is a reflection on the House
of Commons, more severe than any Jacobin
ever uttered : to say that that House is partly
composed of *boys*, and that what they decide
on the most important points is invalid for
want of judgment, is something more than
badinage ; it is a libel on the Constitution,
which entrusts such powers to striplings ; but,
in fact, both the law and the constitution are
justified by experience in admitting persons
of twenty-one years of age to be arrived at ma-
turity ; and it is only our author’s spleen at the
honour-

honourable triumph which Mr Tierney gained by that decision, that can dispute its validity. What he means by *anti-professional*, he must hereafter explain ; probably he means *extra-professional* : but, after all his badinage, let any honest man consult the proceedings on that petition, and say whether the decision was not given on the clearest principles of law and justice. Should the author translate *συνδίκον κλειανον*, undoubted right, I will suppose he has never seen Damm's Lexicon to Pindar, who renders them *apta & conveniens possessio*, a possession, apt or suitable.

“ I am indeed confident, that when all the
 “ personal objects of my praise or censure
 “ shall have passed from the scene, this work
 “ will be found to contain principles of go-
 “ vernment, polity, religion, morality, edu-
 “ cation, criticism, poetry, and literature,
 “ worthy of being transmitted to another
 “ age.” A fine sentence of Junius is here
 mangled, to be adapted to the author of the
 Pursuits of Literature. Dedication, page 2.

“ I have indeed already said much : but I
 “ think, I have something more to offer to
 “ my country, if the blessings of strength
 “ and health should graciously be extended
 “ and

" and continued to me." I trust this mighty something means his memoirs, which he has spoken of already.

" The dirty family of selfishness, which by the law of Providence, defeats its own purposes." This is a poetical expression from Pope :

Love, joy, and hope, fair pleasure's smiling train ;
Hate, fear, and grief, the family of pain.

Essay on Man, Ep. 2. l. 116.

" No man liveth unto himself," is a quotation from Rom. xiv. 17.

" Well-wishers to their country are, above all things, desirous of the steady light of Literature, and of the day-spring from on high.* Yet whatever they or we may hope, the horizon may perhaps be now illuminated with its departing beams." Our author is but a poor comforter at any time, but most of all here, if he means to have it understood, that his own poetry is one of the beams of literature, even in her decline.—Others will compare him to a meteor,—to a vapour which blazes for a moment, promises light, and leads us into darkness.

" But let us still contemplate the glory
I " which

* Luke i. 78.

“ which was cast round other times.” The glory that was cast round other times, was far different from the shade with which he has attempted to obscure the present ; the literature, the taste, the genius, of which he fears the extinction, were all the produce of the best times of liberty. Poetry can never take a daring flight, but when she is free from every restraint: history and oratory exist only in the sunshine of freedom.

“ Satirical glory.” To shew how our author has twisted and inverted the language, I will cite a few passages, and leave my reader to supply the rest, of which he will have frequent opportunities : where the custom of the language is to use two substantives, the second in the genitive case, he has chosen to put an adjective, as in the words quoted ; and, on the contrary, where the adjective is used, he has taken two substantives, as in the Allegory of Satire, which means something totally different, and ought to be “ Allegorical Satire.” “ Romantic memory,” page 150, means “ memory of romances.”

“ The character of Lucilius, the inventor
 “ of Satire, was respected by Scipio and
 “ Lælius. They were his friends. Poetasters,
 “ rheto-

“ rhetoricians, and even men of high quality and of consular rank, were often the subjects of his censure.” When he tells us that Lucilius attacked men of high quality and consular rank, he should imitate his example, rather than attack those only who are unprotected ; but when he tells us, that he was the inventor of satire, he seems to forget that the Greeks, or even the Romans, had any satirists before him : has he never heard of the Margites of Homer, nor the satires of Ennius? but Dryden has examined the point much more learnedly in his Dedication of the Translations of Juvenal and Persius ; I will cite one passage from him ; those who wish for more, must apply to the original : ‘ Quinctilian and Horace must be cautiously interpreted, when they affirm that satire is wholly Roman, and a sort of verse which was not touched on by the Grecians. The reconciliation of my opinion to the standard of their judgment, is not, however, very difficult, since they spake of satire not as in its first elements, but as formed into a separate work, begun by Ennius, pursued by Lucilius, and compleated afterwards by Horace.’ Bishop Hurd, in his introduction to the Commentary on the Art

of Poetry, though his delicacy will not permit him to contradict Horace, plainly shews that he did not consider Lucilius as the inventor of satire, for he acknowledges he cannot be considered as such on any other ground than that he first reduced satire into a regular, consistent poem, having a single and main purpose, and having but one measure: to see how loosely the ancients spoke, when they call a man an inventor, we need only refer to a passage in Paterculus, Lib. ii. ch. 9. where he calls Pomponius the inventor of the Atellane Plays, which Hurd proves he only first represented in the common dialect; for they had formerly never been written but in the Oscan, or provincial language of the country. *Notes on Art of Poetry*, page 189.—
 “Men of high quality” is a poor expression, and ‘the eternity of fame,’ in the next sentence, an awkward one.

“Horace in the politest age, under the
 “despotism of Augustus, insinuated himself
 “into the graces of the Emperor: yet he was
 “peculiarly studious to mark the obnoxious,
 “foolish, or wicked characters of his age.—
 “He was careful not to be misunderstood
 “He noted the name, the profession, and the
 “rank

“ rank of those whom he devoted to undying ridicule, or consigned to the eternity of fame.” Augustus and Mæcenæ well knew the value of such a poet.” Horace seldom marked the vicious or the foolish among the great ; he had therefore no need, like Juvenal and Persius, to disguise what he meant ; he was too familiar with a court, to make courtiers the subject of his satire : and let the author blush when he recollects the Emperor whose favour Horace had obtained by the arts of insinuation and flattery ;* and he exalts to the rank of a god, the subtle subverter of Roman liberty, the crafty tyrant who purchased power by the semblance of virtue, the incestuous paramour of his own daughter, the murderer of Cicero, and the patron of Tiberius. Tyrants do well to purchase the praises of men of talents, that they may make a decent figure with posterity. We are here to look for our author’s notions of government : Horace is praised for upholding the government of Augustus ; the stability of government is connected with literature and poetry : this he has told us before ; (*vide* page 7.) he now tells us what sort of government :

* Od. lib. 3. & *passim*.

vernment : this is honest, if it is not prudent.

“ In the time of Nero and Trajan, Juvenal and Persius exerted a severity without playfulness.” Juvenal never published one satire in the time of Nero, and for one which he wrote in the reign of Adrian, he was banished at the age of eighty, under pretence of receiving a military command ; (*vide* his Life by Suetonius and the notes, *Edit. Pit.*) so much for these writers being either spared or neglected ;—that their works were much circulated, (as we now use the word) there is no evidence.

“ An interval of ages passed, dark and barbarous.” Has our author read many of the writings in those ages which are called barbarous ? if he has, he seems to have forgotten Chaucer, who, tho’ not professionally a satirist, has severely exposed the vices and follies of the times in which he lived. To the six poets whom he enumerates, as enjoying the fulness of satirical glory, I will add one whom he has perhaps never heard of, a satirist, who, from the difference of times, is not so polished as Boileau or Horace, nor so cautious in his satire, for they lived under despots, he under the glory of monarchy, Henry IV. of France.

Reg-

Regnier has all the strength of Juvenal or Persius, and sometimes the delicacy of Horace: he has that quick and penetrating spirit which pierces through the disguise of forms and fashions, and shews things as they really are. Boileau and Horace laugh at the exterior of vice and folly; Regnier lays them bare; he sometimes sees things on the dark side, but he who does so, will not often be deceived. Regnier led a dissolute life: he is therefore sometimes loose in his sentiments, but he has a vigour of thought and a strength of expression not equalled by any writer of succeeding times. Boileau borrowed, or rather stole from him, plentifully: the whole of his address to the king is taken from Regnier; and when we consider the two monarchs, we must soon see which is the flatterer: Regnier only sends his kings to heaven, Boileau brings them thence: Regnier has nearly every requisite for a satirist; neat and forcible in his expressions, strong and vigorous in his ideas; humorous, gay, and severe: he wants nothing but the polish of a more refined age, to be the first satirist of whom the world can boast, in that stile of satire in which he has written; I will not say it is best adapted

ed to the purpose of a satirist; because it generally remains unappropriated; it therefore fails to correct individuals, but it is of use to instruct, like all general principles of morality: he was the Lucilius of Roman satire, Boileau the Horace. Regnier's satires are not the whole of his works; the rest consist of epistles, elegies, and penitential odes; for he began towards the end of his life to feel the effects of his intemperate indulgences, in that debility and languor which are their constant followers. We lament his follies, and pity him for his want of prudence. He was one of those choice spirits whose pleasantry and lively talents purify the grossness of licentious pleasures, but make them at the same time more seductive; for there is a species of gaiety and humour which belongs only to intemperance; it finds no amusement in the quiet regularity of virtue, and exists only in the wild sallies of an unbridled genius. This Regnier eminently possessed, and his own epitaph is perhaps the best specimen of it: he could joke with the most serious events of life, and even death did not find him without an

an epigram.* Boileau was the flatterer of despotism, and the persecutor of rival merit; he has therefore our author's highest praise; but, like much of his praise and his satire, it is undeserved: he sits down to write with a loose idea of a character, and fills up the rest from his own invention,—‘a poet second to none of his predecessors.’ He was inferior to Juvenal and Horace, so far as he literally copies them; and where he is original, he has neither the strength of the one, nor the delicacy of the other. His first satire is an imitation of the third of Juvenal; but the object of the two is different: that of Boileau is merely to ridicule a poor, discontented author, who rather deserves pity than contempt: the dignified indignation of Juvenal loses all its effect from the mouth of Damon: his satire is directed against the vices of a great and corrupt city; that of his imitator

* *J'ai vecu sans pensément,
Me laissant aller doucement,
A la bonne loi naturelle;
Et je m'étonne fort pourquoi
La Mort osa songer a moi,
Qui ne songeai jamais à elle!*

As the works of Regnier are now become rare, I have given my reader this pleasant Epigram, and leave it to some poet to translate.

K

tator against a pitiful individual, whose works and character are neither of them worthy of notice. The second satire is neat and delicate; the third the same, but not original, for it is taken from Regnier's 10th; the fourth is without doubt the worst; the fifth is far inferior to the eighth of Juvenal: the one marks out his objects with unerring certainty, the other lets fly his arrows at random: the one is forcibly concise, the other tediously diffuse; the one shews the boldness of a satirist, the other the timidity of a slanderer—he means somebody, but he dare not speak out. What is the feeble line—'*Je vous connais pour noble a ces illustres marques,*' (l. 47.) compared to the two forcible words of Juvenal, '*Agnosco procerem?*' l. 826. The sixth is a continuation of the first, and they both imitate only a part of the third of Juvenal: he describes the vices as well as the dangers of the city, Boileau only the last; and how weak is he, compared with the force, the fire, the strength, the ardour, and the dignity of Juvenal: the seventh is neat and light: his eighth, which is a satire on man, is by no means equal to Pope in his different essays: his ninth is his master-piece; the irony is delicate,

licate, the satire pungent ; but the objects are not worthy of the weapons : the tenth is a poor imitation of Juvenal's Satire on Women : the eleventh and twelfth, with some brilliant passages, are dull and heavy : on the whole, he might be a gentleman, a courtier, and an elegant writer ; but he was not a satirist, if that means a corrector of morals.

“ A philosopher without being wordy, the
 “ friend of sense and of virtue, a gentleman
 “ in principle, independent in spirit, and
 “ fearless of enemies, however powerful from
 “ their malignity, or formidable from their
 “ rank.” Is this all that is required of a philosopher ? the author, I suppose, meant to say a great deal in a few words, and he has said nothing : that he was the friend of virtue, I will not deny ; but that he was the enemy of many virtuous men, will be seen by turning to the notes to the Amsterdam edition of his works, and the Literary History of the Times. Independent in spirit that man could not be, who was the servile flatterer of the great : and it was no great merit to be fearless of enemies, whom he knew had no power to do him harm ; for he was encouraged and protected by a court.

“ So removed from conceit and forced
“ thought.” Look at the lines 63 and 64 of
his Address to the King, and 75, 87, and 88.

“ An ardent zeal for propriety in senti-
“ ment and in expression.” An ardent zeal
for propriety of expression, seems to be a zeal
too great for its object: a man may be defi-
rous to express his meaning with propriety,
but he will hardly have an ardent zeal for it,
without being ridiculous.

“ Even his compliments, though rather
“ lofty, to Louis the fourteenth, are all con-
“ ceived in the language of a gentleman and
“ a man of genius, who feels that he is con-
“ ferring honour, not receiving it.” I refer
my readers to the address before-mentioned,
particularly lines 3 and 10. but if he has
flattered Louis, he has not been less atten-
tive to his own praise: he magnifies the
task of praising so great a monarch: the in-
ference is extremely easy. But he has spoken
plainest in line 58, which shews his vanity
equal to his meanness. Since our author has
chosen to institute a comparison between him
and the greatest masters of Satire, I also will
go on with comparing them with him, and
with each other, and vindicate the illustrious
Romans

Romans from the unmerited degradation of being lowered to an equality with their modern imitators. Between him and Juvenal or Persius, there is little resemblance, either in their subjects or their manner. Horace laughs at the follies of mankind, they chastise their vices : Horace attacks insignificant characters, they strike only at the highest : Horace never goes beyond a sneer or a laugh, they never excite a smile : even Pope is more bold than Boileau, though more delicate than Juvenal or Persius ; they wrote with all the spirit of Romans in the best times of the Republic, though they lived under the terrors of despotism ; Boileau, too, lived under a tyrant, and his writings have the air of a courtier ; they satirized bad men, he only bad writers : as a humorous and didactic poet, he has few equals ; but, as a satirist, and a man of independent spirit, I have thought it right to point out our author's mis-statement of his character. Whoever wishes to see his fulsome flattery burlesqued, may read our honest *Matt. Prior's* Translation of his Ode on the taking of Namur.

“ The majesty of the French monarch, in
 “ that cultivated age, was surely as worthy
 “ of

" of homage as the *deity* of the Roman Augustus." And both equally worthy of contempt.

" I call their language *ancient*, which existed before the revolution; for I scarce understand the modern democratic jargon. "*Grave virus munditias pepulit.*" That the French language has received the addition of many new terms since the revolution, is true; new things cause new words: but that the literature of France has been corrupted by these terms, I totally deny. Our author, I suppose, reads only the Newspapers, to know what France is now: if he had read Peltier (partial as he is) he must have seen that neither poetry nor philosophy are on the decline. Some of the writers in the charming Society of the *Vaudeville* are equal in gaiety, elegance, and playfulness of humour, to any thing produced in the best times of France; and in graver compositions, *Le Gouvé* and *Vigée* might be a credit to any age or country; the latter strongly resembles Boileau, and though he has more boldness, he appears to have imitated him:* but our author despises every thing that

* In addition to what I have already said of France, I will here remark, that the events of the war having now nearly driven

is French too much to look at it, and yet will give his opinion of what he takes no pains

driven the French back to their own country, the posture of affairs is materially changed, and different hopes and expectations are now to be formed: to each party there is but one line of conduct left which wisdom and honesty can dictate; but, alas! they seldom direct the affairs of the world.—Should the Allies, after having forced the French within their ancient limits, propose to them such a peace as might prevent them again from disturbing the tranquillity of Europe; in case of refusal, they will be heartily supported by all their subjects, and successfully terminate by the sword, what negotiation failed to accomplish: or should the French, after having successfully defended their country from invasion, propose to the nations leagued against them, such terms of peace as may preserve their own territory entire, and prevent their interfering with others, they will exhibit an instance of magnanimity and prudence which will make it difficult for any government to refuse their offers; and if after that they should give to other nations the example of a good government, on republican principles, they will do more to propagate those principles than by all the efforts of the sword: they will exhibit to the eyes and the feelings of surrounding nations, arguments which no force of eloquence or of arms can resist: till then, those nations are justified in resisting the experiment of what they deem uncertain speculations, tho' they are not justified in using the means they have done to prevent their success; but however such an issue is to be wished, for the sake of truth, justice, and humanity, it is much to be apprehended that none of these will have sufficient weight; for as all great changes of opinion in the world have occasioned great convulsions, it is to be feared, that all nations have yet much to suffer before the present conflict

to be informed in. He seems to have mistaken the character of the French language, when he says it is *forcible* and *terse* : it is neat and elegant, but wants a condensation of expression, which renders it so difficult for the French to translate Greek or Latin writers, so as to preserve the spirit of either. For the truth of this, let any man consult those parts of Juvenal or Horace which Boileau has imitated, or any of the classics which Frenchmen have translated. His quotation from Horace is a happy specimen of his misrepresentation :

conflict of opinions is terminated. It is more than probable that the different powers at war will contend for a great length of time, with various and alternate success, till most of the old governments are worn out in the contest. Let it be remarked, that I here and at all times separate French principles and French conduct: the principles of their constitution are excellent; the conduct of their rulers is execrable: they have been connected merely by accident; war is the element of the one, but peace of the other. That any thing so intrinsically good should accidentally be connected with evil, is somewhat strange, yet it has ever been so; and to what wise dispensation of things it is owing that the best gifts of Providence, even Monarchy and Christianity, should have occasioned such infinite bloodshed and distress, it is impossible for finite wisdom to discover; it is enough, however, to convince us, that no good can be obtained without the expence of much evil, and to make us resigned to that power, whatever it is, that directs

sentation: he has made him say the exact contrary to what he has said in his Epistle to Augustus, lines 158 and 159: his words rectify the affairs of the world. (*August 27.*)—To what object the attempts of our ministers will be now directed, it is difficult to conjecture.* Mallet du Pan has sung the requiem of the coalition, in acknowledging that it could not be effectual without the aid of Prussia. Thus has the wisdom and firmness of a stripling saved France from the danger of partition, his own country from the miseries of war, and perhaps shortened the calamities of Europe. Within the last week the political horizon of France has considerably brightened, and that country seems now to have the prospect of being repaid for all her sufferings, by the enjoyment of a government, wise, virtuous, and steady. The path of wickedness has been sufficiently trod, and must be disgusting from its smoothness; so that the new rulers of France, ought to be virtuous, as a matter of taste; any coxcomb can ruin a nation, but to save one, requires patience, virtue, and talents. To speak seriously, I have such confidence in the character of Buonaparte, and the men who act with him, that I believe them actuated by a desire for the public good: they have commenced, unlike the villains who preceded them, with acts of moderation and mercy; and if they go on as they have begun, the constitution of France, in which there was too little connection between the executive and legislative powers, will be improved, and she will speedily be blessed with prosperity and tranquillity.

—“ If this fail,

“ The pillar’d firmament is rottenness,

“ And earth’s base built on stubble.” *Milton’s Comus.*

Should Buonaparte prove a tyrant, or a traitor, human nature is no longer to be trusted.—(*November 28.*)

* *Mercure Britannique*, No. 27.

are ‘ *Grave virus munditiæ pepulere.*’—This is to make a man say one thing, when he means another, and then call it quoting his sentiments.

“ When I name Dryden, I comprehend “ every varied excellence of *our* poetry.”—Our author’s next praise is bestowed on Dryden, the hireling advocate of any cause,—the successive flatterer of Cromwell and Charles. Surely Pope had many excellencies which Dryden never possessed ; and our author thinks so, for he tells us afterwards that he completed what was wanting in him.

“ In harmony, strength, modulation, “ rythm, energy, he first displayed the full “ power of the English language.” Doubtless this praise belongs more properly to Milton than to Dryden, who came after him. As to what he calls the *Allegory of Satire*, see Johnson’s Life of Dryden, for his opinion of the poem which is so highly praised.

“ His satire had an original character. It “ was the strain of Archilochus sounding “ the lyre of Alcæus.” He had neither the virulence of Archilochus, nor the sweetness of Alcæus. In his character of Pope, his language is more than usually affected : he cannot speak at all as other people do.

“ He had excelled in description, in pastoral, in pathetic, and in general criticism ;
 “ and had given an English existence in perpetuity to the Father of all Poetry. Thus
 “ honoured, and with these pretensions, he
 “ left them all for that excellence, for which
 “ the maturity of his talents and judgment
 “ so eminently designed him.” I am at a loss to perceive, how having written pastoral poetry is to qualify a man for being a satirist. As to Pope’s general criticism, the justness of his precepts in his critical works has been ably disputed by Dr Aiken, in his Letters to his Son. ‘ He had given an English existence in perpetuity to the Father of all Poetry,’ means, I suppose, that he had translated Homer. ‘ Thus honoured.’ How honoured, he has not told us. If Pope and his writings were not above our author’s censure, he had never had his praise : he was too free, too liberal a writer, to please him.

“ Every avenue to knowledge and every
 “ mode of observation were open to his curious, prying, piercing and unwearied
 “ intellect.” Prying is certainly an epithet not very honourable to Mr Pope’s character, tho’ it might suit our author’s.

“ His works are so generally read and studied, that I should not merely fatigue, but
 “ I should almost insult you by such a needless
 “ disquisition.” This sentence is defective :
 it wants some member ; instead of ‘ *such a
 needless disquisition,* ’ he should have said, ‘ *by
 a needless disquisition on them.* ’

“ As a disciple of these great masters,
 “ and full of that spirit which an unbroken
 “ and an honourable intimacy with their
 “ works has inspired, I now present myself a
 “ votary at their temple ; and in some measure
 “ clothed in the robes of their hereditary
 “ priesthood, I would also enter, and
 “ offer my oblation at the high altar of my
 “ country. But if, unworthy of this hallowed
 “ investment and interior ministry, the
 “ door of the sanctuary is closed upon me ;
 “ I shall retire without a murmur, and, with
 “ devotion unimpaired, worship in the vestibule.” Here is confusion worse confounded. He is a minister in the temple of satire, if any body ever heard of such a temple, and yet he offers his oblations on the high altar of his country : he is at once the votary and the priest, and yet he doubts whether he is worthy of the sacred investment. To be in some measure clothed, is to

be little better than naked : and I doubt some people will say this is our author's case, as far as regards his poetical garments : but after all, his modesty steps in, and, though stripped of his holy robes, and kicked out of the temple, he is determined to pray in the porch. I am sorry to say he deserves no better place ; but this comes of being presumptuous. The quotation at the end is partly from Statius and partly of his own making : *vide* Statius, lib. 4. 4. l. 54. where it will be seen how much belongs to each of the two.

Having now gone over the particulars of that part of his work which I have undertaken at present to examine, it becomes me to review the substance of what he has advanced, for the purpose of obviating more fully the effects of his doctrines. To say much of his politics might not now be safe ; for the side he has chosen is protected by the strong arm of power, ready to fall on all those who differ from him. I will therefore only say, in general, that he seems to have no liberal or comprehensive idea of government and society ; of the means by which they have arrived at their present excellence, or the possibility of further improvement : whatever is established, is, with him, consecrated from

the rude touch of innovation ; and even the gentle progress of time can work no change for the better, as if the world was not a continued scene of change, and the experience of ages did not teach us that principles and customs, the most abhorrent from the ideas of one race of men, become familiar and easy to another. According to his maxims, history and philosophy have nothing more to teach us ; and the world, instead of being henceforth what it has hitherto been, (a series of experiments) is now arrived at such a pitch of excellence in politics, religion, and morality, as precludes the possibility of any further lights,—we must sit down satisfied with what we are, and teach our children to do the same, or be called Jacobins, and treated as such,—we must acquiesce with our author and his friends* in the belief of what they tell us,—we must read only such books as they allow us,—we must approve what they approve, or be condemned as disturbers of the public peace, and enemies of all established government : such is his liberality, and such his exertions for the good of mankind. He may mean well, but he is certainly mistaken, for the testimony of all ages is against him.

* The authors of the Anti-Jacobin and their employers.

Mankind never were the same in their laws, their religion, or their customs, for a hundred years together in any civilized country upon earth : even maxims that have been considered as fundamental, have yielded to the force of time, much less the fleeting forms of political establishments. To hate and persecute their enemies, was the religion and the policy of the Jews ; to love them, was the milder precept of christianity : history is but the record of perpetual change, and the analogy of nature seems to confirm the existence of the propensity in man : what was land once is now sea : earthquakes and volcanoes have swept away cities, and the habitations of men are inhabited by beasts : the seat of empire, arts, and commerce, has been perpetually changing, and is now transferred from the eastern to the western continent ; and, with all this change, the world is without doubt, on the whole, improved : yet the vanity and arrogance of one little mortal has possessed him with the belief that he can arrest the progress of society and of man, and make that stationary which Providence has hitherto made progressive. Vain mortal ! check thy presumptuous folly, and learn to believe that it is not for thee, nor for all those who are the idols of

thy worship, to restrain the innate propensities of thy species, to set thy seal upon the door of knowledge, nor to say to the soul of man, in the search after truth, '*Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.*'

The next leading feature in his introductory letter is his severe condemnation of all freethinkers in religion, for which I will only suggest to him the possibility of his being mistaken in what he believes to be right, from the example of men who were thought to be wiser than him having embraced as truth what we now consider as error. More and Erasmus were Papists, and believed doctrines which our author, by the help of the superior lights which have been acquired since their times, now very wisely considers as ridiculous: it may be his fate to have some of his opinions thought as ridiculous by posterity.

Another strong part of his letter is his zeal against Popery; a zeal which I have endeavoured to direct to its proper object, and to shew our author where the true ground of fear exists: he has been very violent against the emigrants who have fled, and the Papists who are tolerated here; but it is not of them that I have any dread; they do not alarm me: if

I have any fear, it is from the popery of protestant divines, not of French emigrants,—the popery of a church which is rich and established, not of one which is in poverty and exile: it is from the doctrines of spiritual power and civil submission, now preached by the aspiring ministers of a church which can reward their ambition, and a government which courts their services, not from the impotent and unambitious ministers of a sect which has no longer either power or influence; whose doctrines are disregarded because they are unsupported by authority, and whose only object is to obtain protection, not power: the whore of Babylon has lost all her wealth and attractions, but her daughter is yet rich and admired. His frequent quotations, of which he attempts a defence, I have strongly reprobated; he is apprised of his failing, and endeavours to obviate it, by translations of the passages he has quoted, yet not without contradicting his own opinions;* for he has laid great stress on the utility of the original words of classical authors, to enforce and illustrate what he has advanced. I will hereafter shew that his

* *Vide* page 26.

translations are not faithful, and have considerably weakened the force and effect of the authors he has quoted, and that, if he understood them, he was determined other people should not.

The faults of his critical principles will be more fully shewn when I have occasion to remark them in different parts of his writings in which he has censured the works of others. His stile, if examined by any of the rules of legitimate composition, will be found to contain all the faults, and few of the beauties, that have been noticed by the greatest critics: it is frigid, affected, harsh, bombastical, and puerile; it is metaphorical, but his metaphors are far sought, and ill adapted; it is poetical without being harmonious; it has the uncouthness without the force of antiquity; it is not always intelligible, sometimes not grammatical, and constantly the reverse of simplicity and purity: if any man wishes to see some of its faults more forcibly and neatly expressed than it is in my power to express, I will refer him to Dionysius's enumeration of the faults of Plato's stile, which are numerous: *Vide* Dionysius's *Epist. ad Cn. Pomp. Ed. Sylb. 1586. p. 127. l. 20. sect. 5.* and to the same author's judgment of

others who affected a poetical and pompous phraseology, *vide* Dionysius Lyfias, line 27.

His ideas on the chief satirists of ancient and modern times, I trust, I have shewn to be defective and erroneous, in not having mentioned all that deserve the praise of excellence, and in having given a false account of those whom he has mentioned ; but, on the whole, to speak impartially of his talents and his acquirements, I will confess, that he has sometimes a rare felicity of expression ; that he is moderately versed in classical learning, but destitute of invention and judgment ; that his philological information is various and extensive, but not accurate ; that he is better suited to the detail of parts than to comprehend or to create a system ; that his stile is sometimes rich, but always laboured ; that his powers are much indebted to cultivation, but partake very little of genius ; and that, with some just sentiments of religion, he wants the vital principle of Christianity.

The author, in various parts of his book, takes great pains to have it believed that the support of virtue and morality is one great object of his satire, and undoubtedly they are much connected with the literary

productions of the times ; but they depend not on them solely ; so that when he has reprov'd the principles of one set of men, even supposing them to be erroneous, he has done but a part of his duty : it was not thus that the great satirists of antiquity dealt with the times ; they reprov'd vicious characters as well as erroneous principles ; and it is thus that every man must do who wishes to reform :—he must be impartial too,—he must strike at venality, perfidy, and profligacy, wherever they are to be found,—he must enter the palaces of the great, as well as the garrets of the poor, and drag forth titled infamy to shame and contempt ; and if example is the soul of virtue, he must endeavour to purify the great,—he must chastise aristocratical vices, and pull down spiritual wickedness in high places ; but if he is afraid of Attorney Generals and Treasury Solicitors, let him no more boast of his zeal for religion and morality,—he is not formed for a satirist.

I have now nearly finished, for the present, with this contemptible author, and, if I have failed to expose his arrogance, ignorance, and wickedness, I will yet add a few words more, without fear of repetition, for he has afford-

ed abundant matter, such as it is, for reiterated censure. Had he been, what he pretends to be (a legitimate successor of the great satirists of former times) I should never have presumed nor desired to reprove him,—had he, like them, shewn a generous indignation against vice, without any tincture of private or party malignity,—had he possessed their compact and regular stile of writing, without wandering into needless excursions,—had he, either in poetry or in prose, shewn the virtues of a great soul or the talents of a great genius, I should never have dared to lift my feeble voice against such powers, properly directed: had his stile been any thing but a tissue of quotations, even where they are not acknowledged,—had he been uniformly low, in stile and ideas, I should have suffered him to pass quietly by unnoticed and unmolested; but when I see an author without one spark of the heavenly fire of genius, without one generous or liberal principle, with a sanguinary thirst for persecution and a virulent intolerance of all difference of opinion, a rooted prejudice for the establishments of Christianity, without one particle of its spirit,—when I see an author, whose only greatness consists in

his own consequence, imposing upon the public, with the air of independence and dignity,—when I see an author whose only merit as a scholar is that of having read the classics, without being improved by them, perpetually recalling us to the ancient models of composition, while he is perpetually violating them, a man who has sacrificed the purity and simplicity of his native language to the affectation of novelty and the affectation of knowledge,—when I see such a man taking advantage of the times, and labouring to depress the best men, and the best principles, without one requisite for a satirist but his virulence, imposing upon the taste and pockets of the public, by a perpetual repetition of his malignant effusions; sowing the seeds of jealousy, suspicion, and distrust among men, by concealing his name, and yet condemning with merciless severity the foibles of others,—when I see such a man receive the slightest countenance, I feel an indignation at his impudence and the public infatuation, which no considerations of danger can repress. I feel for the national character when I see it degraded by listening to the dark suggestions of an anonymous incendiary,—I feel for the dignity of classical learning, when it is prostituted

to so vile a purpose,—I feel for the injured names of those men, from whose writings I first imbibed the glorious sentiments of liberty, when they are called in to sanction the most daring encroachments on the birth-right of Britons, and lend a force to the denunciations of a sanguinary bigot,—I feel for the condition of posterity, when I see the Author of the Pursuits of Literature set up for a guide of the public taste, a guardian of the public morals, and a defender of the public liberty; and if I have spoken with more than usual warmth, I am urged by that spirit of liberty and truth which yields to no temptation, and requires no restraint.

Morpeth, May 22, 1799.

SINCE writing the above, I have had the pleasure to see that my method of examining this author has also occurred to Mr John Cartwright, who, in his celebrated Appeal, lately published, has exposed the most gross and impudent of our Author's opinions on the subject of Reform. Should I succeed, as well as he has done, in exposing sophistry and venality, I should think my time well employed: a book so excellent in all respects has not for many years been given

to the world : the spirit is manly, temperate, and candid,—the stile neat and forcible,—and the matter abundant ; but it contains too much truth not to be prosecuted : the manner in which it is delivered to the public, shews, however, that the Author is firmly prepared for the worst.—In addition to what I have already remarked, I must here notice what I had omitted before,—that the words (page 32.) ‘ Quos orbe sub omni Jam vix septena numerat Sapientia fama,’ are not marked as belonging to any author, nor do I immediately recollect from whom they are quoted. I have omitted other things, perhaps of more consequence, but I trust that my present distance from libraries and literary men, and my residence in a distant province, will be admitted as my apology. The quotation above-mentioned, I have since found, is from Statius, Sylv. 5. c. 3. but not exactly quoted : ‘ Quosque orbe sub omni Ardua septena numerat sapientia fama ?’ are the words of Statius.—Having nearly finished my remarks on the first Dialogue, I trust to have them published soon after the new year commences.

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